REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 11 and 12 have been amended. Claim 2 has been cancelled. Claims 1 and 3-15 are pending and under consideration.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 USC 102

Claims 1, 2 and 4-15 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Thorland et al. (US 6,457,071) (hereinafter "Thorland").

Thorland discloses a system and method for determining connection accuracy at an interface. The system and method of Thorland includes a host computer 100, a peripheral device 200, and a connection cable 201. Thorland, 5:12-5:15.

In Thorland, the inputs to the peripheral device attached to the conductive lines leading to the connector are all bi-directional. During power-up of the system, each line is electrically tri-stated, meaning that the lines are in a high impedance state and neither sink nor source power to any device. When the peripheral is powered up for the first time, these lines, or a portion of the lines, would go into "input-only" mode and present a high impedance connection to the communications bus. Presenting a high impedance connection to the bus prevents any adverse effect on the bus, such as corruption of data thereon. Thorland, 7:23-7:32.

In Thorland, once the peripheral device has determined the location of the identifying signal sent by the host, it is desired to have the peripheral device communicate certain information to the host. It is now necessary to switch some of the pins or wires which are part of the peripheral's connection to the host to an "output" status to enable transmission of data to the host. Thorland, 7:33-7:39.

Further in Thorland, the peripheral device could transmit the identification information along one or more selected wires, and the host computer would perform detection so as to locate the expected signal among the wires coming into the host computer side of the connection which may be a motherboard. Thorland, 7:49-7:54.

According to the method of Thorland, in an uncommunicative condition, the host, after a certain period of time, will conclude that the connector is either entirely absent, or connected far from its proper position and can display a message to the user indicating this finding. The

peripheral device, being unable to locate an identifying feature on any incoming line may also communicate the lack of connection directly to the user. Such communication can comprise the use of "blink codes" which cause an LED or other light on the peripheral to turn on and off a fixed number of times, or to turn on a dedicated hazard light specifically indicating a lack of connection to the host. Thorland, 9:18-9:29.

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 5

Amended claim 1 recites: "...a timer that counts a time required for receiving the command from the host." Support for this amendment may be found in at least Figure 1. In contrast to amended claim 1, Thorland does not disclose a timer. Thorland mentions at column 9, line 30, that "the host, after a certain period of time, will conclude that the connector is either entirely absent, or connected far from its proper position and can display a message to the user indicating this finding." Thorland does not disclose a timer, and, further, the "certain period of time" applies to the host device and not to the peripheral device. Amended claim 1 recites an apparatus including a timer.

Claims 4 and 5 depend on claim 1 and are therefore believed to be allowable for at least the foregoing reasons. Claim 2 has been cancelled.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

Claims 6-10

Claim 6 recites: "...if a command is not received from the host for a predetermined period of time after the flag is set, commanding a timer to increase a time counter..." Similar to the argument made regarding amended claim 1, in contrast to claim 6, Thorland does not disclose a timer.

Claims 7-10 depend on claim 6 and are therefore believed to be allowable for at least the foregoing reasons.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

Claims 11-14

Amended claim 11 recites: "...a timer circuit configured to increment a time counter each time the controller checks for the command signal and does not detect a command signal." Support for this amendment may be found in at least original claim 12. Similar to the argument

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made for claim 1, in contrast to amended claim 11, Thorland does not disclose a timer circuit. Thorland mentions at column 9, line 30, that "the host, after a certain period of time, will conclude that the connector is either entirely absent, or connected far from its proper position and can display a message to the user indicating this finding." Thorland does not disclose a timer circuit, and, further, the "certain period of time" applies to the host device and not to the peripheral device. Amended claim 11 recites an apparatus including a timer circuit.

Claims 12-14 depend on claim 11 and are therefore believed to be allowable for at least the foregoing reasons. Claim 12 has been amended to cancel the timer circuit feature from claim 12 as claim 11 has been amended to recite the timer circuit.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

Claim 15

Claim 15 recites: "...incrementing a counter if no command signal was detected..." In contrast to claim 15, Thorland does not disclose a counter. Thorland suggests that the host, after a certain period of time, will conclude that the connector is not connected, but does not disclose a counter.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

CLAIM REJECTION – 35 USC 103

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thorland.

Claim 3 depends on claim 1 and is therefore believed to be allowable over Thorland for the foregoing reasons. Further, claim 3 recites features that patentably distinguish over Thorland. For example, claim 3 recites that the indicator is a light emitting diode that turns on in response to the control signal output from the controller, when the host is connected to the AT Attachment Packet Interface (ATAPI) drive via the input/output cable, and turns off when the host is not connected to the AT Attachment Packet Interface (ATAPI) drive via the input/output cable.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: _Nov 15, 2005_   By: _Gregory W. Harper_
                                 Gregory W. Harper
                                 Registration No. 55,248

1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501